

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 2-19 and 22-41 stand rejected in the outstanding Final Rejection.

Applicant noted an appeal in this application but believes that minor amendments to the claims will clarify the present invention. Accordingly, claims 2, 3, 6-9, 14, 15, 18, 22, 23, 36, 37, 40 & 41 have been amended. As a result claims 2-19 and 22-41 remain in this application.

Claims 17, 38 and 39 are objected to under 37 CFR §1.75(c) as allegedly not further limiting the claims from which they depend. This objection is respectfully traversed as this claim format is specifically permitted by the Board of Appeals. The Examiner's attention is directed to *Ex parte Porter*, 25 USPQ2d 1144, 1147 (BOPAI 1992) in which the Board indicated that claims could be drafted in "a short-hand format" to incorporate the subject matter of a claim from which they depended.

In this case, claims 17, 38 and 39 all recite "a processing network responsive to an activity scheduler as in claim" 22, 23 and 2, respectively. Claims 22, 23 and 2 all recite activity schedulers which could be combined or utilized in a completely unlimited fashion. Dependent claims 17, 38 and 39 limit the activity scheduler to one which includes the recited processing network and the interrelationship, i.e., the processing network is responsive to the activity scheduler. Accordingly, claims 17, 38 and 39 clearly further limit the subject matter of the previous claims.

In the *Ex parte Porter* case, the Board of Appeals held that “we do regard a claim that incorporates by reference all of the subject matter of another claim, that is, the claim is not broader in any respect, to be in compliance with the fourth paragraph of 35 USC §112.” Accordingly, reconsideration of the objection to claims 17, 38 and 39 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-20 and 22-41 stand rejected under 35 USC §103 as unpatentable over Jennings (U.S. Patent 4,796,178) in view of Breuninger (EP 0 266 065). The Examiner’s admission that Jennings fails to teach the numerous structures and structural interrelationships set out in the Official Action and required by Applicant’s independent claim 2 is very much appreciated, in particular, the modular structure and the construction from an assembly of tiles where the tiles have specified characteristics and interconnections.

However, Applicant realizes that the Examiner may have misunderstood the claimed invention which relates to design tiles, i.e., individual sub-units of design, and may have considered this to be a structural limitation, i.e., physically separate components which are interconnected. As a result, applicant has amended independent claim 2 to clearly indicate that the modular design is comprised of an assembly of design tiles where each tile comprises a building block having logic and interconnections with other tiles and that the design tiles are interconnected in the required two-dimensional array of n rows and m columns.

Applicant has further amended claim 2 to indicate that the n rows include a series of “stim-wait circuits” and the m columns are arranged to operate one of the “stim-wait circuits.” At no point has the Examiner indicated that either Jennings or the Breuninger European patent disclose n rows or m columns involving the stim-wait circuits and the operation of the stim-wait circuits as set out in Applicant’s independent claims. While the Examiner does suggest that Jennings teaches a “stim-wait” channel at column 7, lines 51-57 on page 4 in association with claim 6, there is no disclosure of the composition of elements set out in Applicant’s claim 2 or claims dependent thereon.

Should the Examiner believe that either Jennings or Breuninger teach the claimed organization of design tiles forming a two-dimensional array of n rows and m columns with the recited operations and interrelationships, he is respectfully requested to point out exactly where such disclosure is contained in either the Jennings or Breuninger patents. Absent such disclosure, the subject matter of Applicant’s independent claims 2, 22-24, 36 and 37 cannot be considered obvious in view of the Jennings/Breuninger combination.

In order to permit entry and consideration of the amended claims, Applicant has filed a Request for Continuing Examination (RCE) concurrent with this Amendment and requests consideration of these claims and their amendments prior to the issuance of any further Official Action.

Having responded to all objections and rejections set forth in the outstanding Official Action, it is submitted that claims 2-19 and 22-41 are in condition for allowance

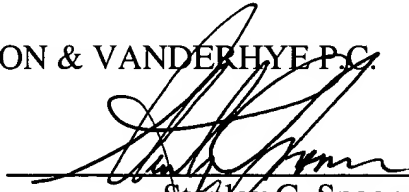
CAMPBELL
Appl. No. 09/152,266
September 24, 2004

and notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. In the event the Examiner is of the opinion that a brief telephone or personal interview will facilitate allowance of one or more of the above claims, he is respectfully requested to contact applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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